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PRODUCE MORE, PROTECT MORE

DEC-9 1974

2021
... a challenge to the American farmer



In 1974, more than ever before, farmers and ranchers will work their land with one eye on the nation's economy and the other on its ecology. They are being asked to—

Produce more wheat, corn, grain sorghum and other agricultural products needed by the American people.

Protect more of the American land to keep it green and fertile for the next year—and the next generation.

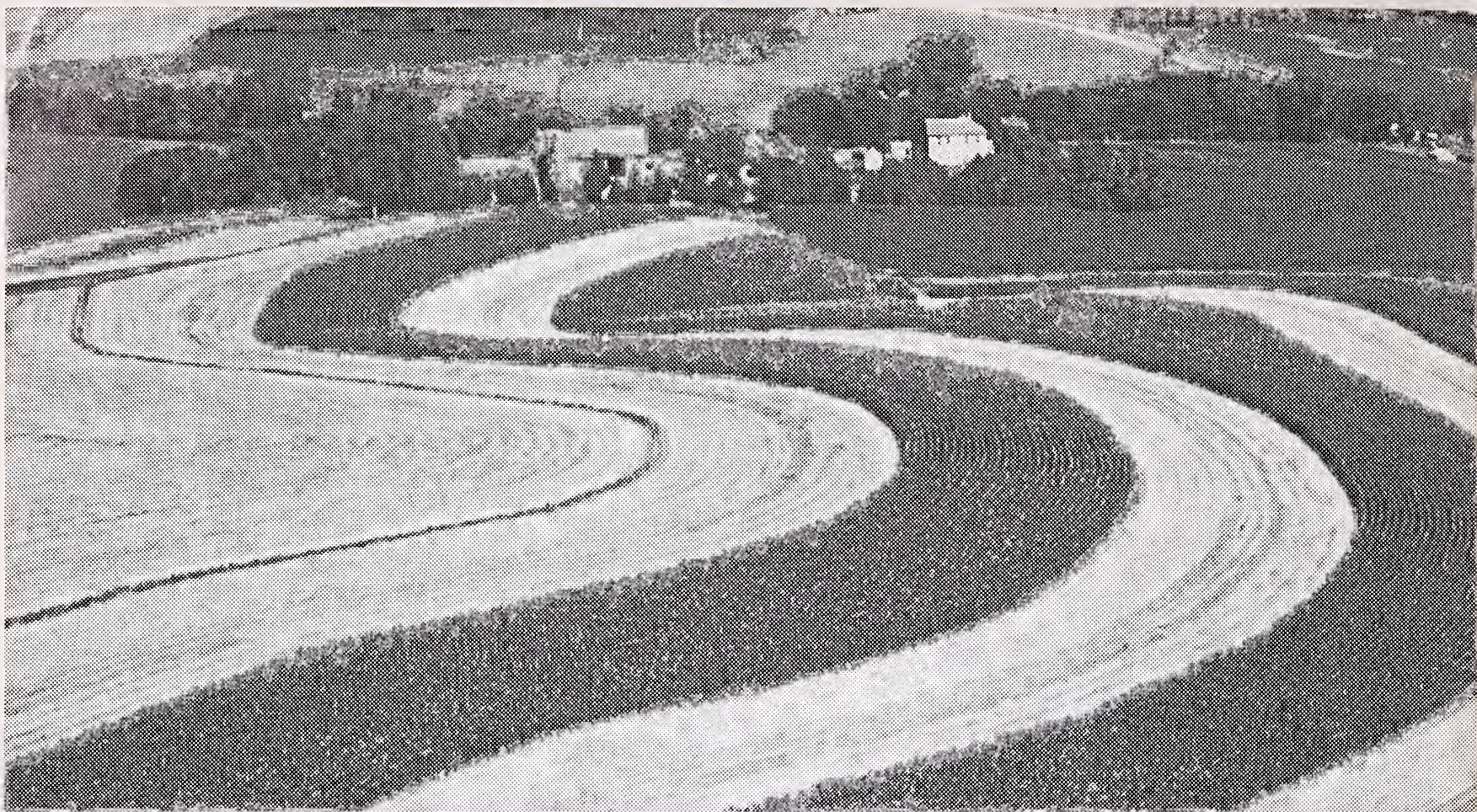
The demand for food means that millions of acres of land formerly in grass or in set-aside programs will go into crops this year. At the same time, present cropland will be used more intensively.

The farmer, the number one guardian of the nation's natural resources, has a responsibility to use his soil wisely—and he knows it. Armed with improvements in seed, agricultural equipment, tillage methods, and conservation techniques, he can confidently expect to meet the greater demand for food without damaging the land.

To help him, the U.S. Department of Agriculture offers these recommendations:

1. Farm all land under a conservation plan.
2. Plant the right crops in the right soil.
3. Use effective soil and water conservation techniques.
4. Consider some form of minimum tillage or no-till.
5. Keep steep land or other areas highly susceptible to wind or water erosion covered by grass or trees.

Technical help in establishing sound conservation practices is available from USDA's Soil Conservation Service (SCS) through almost 3,000 soil conservation district offices. In the coming year, SCS, along with other specialists in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, will give top priority to help farmers and ranchers increase production without damaging resources.



ON THE COVER: Combines harvest fields of hybrid grain sorghum in Texas. Stubble remaining after grain is harvested protects land against wind erosion and adds organic matter to the soil. (Tex-51158)



ABOVE: Strip-cropping and contouring conservation practices have been established on this Iowa farm. Such practices on moderately rolling land greatly reduce the risk of soil erosion and allow rain to soak into the soil rather than runoff. (Ia-2488)

LEFT: Farmers and ranchers throughout the country will decide soon how much more land they will put into crop production. In 1973, corn was the leading crop planted, occupying 75½ million acres. (Mich-61124)



NOTE TO EDITORS: This Picture Story was printed using a coarse line screen and is reproducible. Magazines and newspapers may obtain 8x10 glossy prints of these photographs from the Photography Division, Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Specify title and number of this publication.

MINIMUM TILLAGE is rapidly gaining popularity over conventional tillage methods throughout the country. Below, an Indiana farmer shows how soybeans can be planted directly in corn stubble eliminating the usual plowing and disking operations. This method of planting reduces soil loss 40 to 90 percent, conserves time and labor, reduces gasoline and diesel fuel bills by 50 percent and more, an important factor during the energy crisis. (Ind-60599)



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FARMERS AND RANCHERS can receive technical help in protecting the land from the Soil Conservation Service through their local soil conservation district while they increase production. Conservation plans are based on a scientific soil survey that show the land's drainage patterns, erosion hazards, the suitability of the soils for different crops, and conservation practices necessary to protect the land. (0872W1091-32)



TERRACE CONSTRUCTION is necessary on some farm and ranch land to slow down water runoff and prevent costly soil losses. On the Iowa farm below, there are 14 miles of grass backslope terraces. After an unprecedented 21 inches of rain in a single month, the farmer said soil loss was less than one inch. (1a-2824)